ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR
Executive Office of the Mayor

AMERICORPS*STATE
2004 GUIDELINES

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2004 AMERICORPS GUIDELINES
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INTRODUCTION

November 17, 2003

Dear Prospective Applicant,

The DC Commission on National and Community Service (DC CNCS) looks forward to receiving applications for operating an AmeriCorps program within the District of Columbia. Please use the attached guidelines to apply for AmeriCorps*State program grant funds.

DC CNCS anticipates being able to award federal funding for both new and continuing AmeriCorps programs for fiscal year 2004-2005. New applicants with high-quality proposals will compete nationally with other new applicants and continuing programs for federal funding. In addition, DC CNCS has a minimum of $103,000 available in local formula funds.

DC CNCS seeks to fund innovative community service programs that use service as a strategy to address compelling community needs in the areas of education, public safety, homeland security and other human needs. Eligible applicants are local nonprofit organizations and state and local units of government (other than state education agencies). Programs applying to DC CNCS for funding must operate only within the District. Individuals are not eligible to apply. An electronic copy of the RFA is available at www.cncs.dc.gov.

The deadline for applications is 5 pm on January 5, 2004. Late applications will not be accepted. An application is considered late at 5:01 pm. Applicants must submit applications via eGrants.

Potential applicants are required to attend one of the following technical assistance sessions at One Judiciary Square, 441 4th Street NW: November 20, 2003 from 9 am to noon; December 1, 2003 from 5 pm to 8 pm (Take the Metro's Red Line to Judiciary Square, exit 4th Street, courthouse side.) Call Cliffie Bailey at (202) 727-7925 to RSVP for a training session.

Very truly yours,

Deborah A. Gist

Deborah A. Gist
Executive Director

OVERVIEW

THE DC COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

The DC Commission on National and Community Service (DCCNCS) was established by an Executive Order of Mayor Anthony A. Williams on July 21, 2000 and is housed in the Executive Office of the Mayor. The mission of the DC Commission on National and Community Service is to strengthen and promote the District of Columbia's spirit of service through partnerships, national service and volunteerism.

In support of its mission, the DC CNCS funds the AmeriCorps*State programs operating in the District of Columbia. DC CNCS seeks to fund high-quality AmeriCorps programs that will address citywide goals and the priorities of the District of Columbia's Strategic Plan by mobilizing residents as volunteers, AmeriCorps members, Citizen Corps trained volunteers and Learn and Serve participants to:
   1.) Enhance the education of our youth;
   2.) Improve citizen safety and neighborhood emergency preparedness; and
   3.) Strengthen our community through service.

As with the Corporation for National and Community Service (The Corporation), DC CNCS is not setting aside funds solely for programs addressing these issues, but encourages organizations to address these priority areas in its AmeriCorps program design to help forward the District's vision.

DC CNCS, which is a District government office within the Executive Office of the Mayor, administers the AmeriCorps*State programs through federal funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Therefore, District and federal rules and regulations apply. In addition to providing the funds, DC CNCS provides oversight and support to grantees selected as programs. Oversight includes site visits, fiscal monitoring and reporting requirements. Support includes AmeriCorps trainings, program director meetings, and one-on-one technical assistance.

DC CNCS works closely with other national service providers in the District including AmeriCorps*National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and Senior Corps to share resources, effective practices, and support to strengthen the local national service network. DC CNCS also works with a cadre of other organizations throughout the District to promote service and volunteerism. Mayor Anthony A. Williams designated DC CNCS as the District coordinator for Citizen Corps. Citizen Corps creates opportunities for individuals to help their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies. DC CNCS also coordinates the Mayor's Community Service Award, which recognizes one youth and one adult volunteer each month for outstanding community service in the District.

THE AMERICORPS NETWORK

AmeriCorps is a national service network that provides full- and less than full-time opportunities for participants, called members, to serve their communities and build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to meet local environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. Within these five issue areas, programs may submit proposals that address specific problems of local communities. In other words, local needs drive AmeriCorps.

In the short time since AmeriCorps' inception, its members have achieved impressive results. This year, more than 50,000 AmeriCorps members will serve communities throughout the country.

Please use these guidelines to apply for one of the following types of programs:
- AmeriCorps*State Programs (Competitive and Formula)
- AmeriCorps Education Awards Program
- Planning grants

2004 APPLICATIONS: KEY ELEMENTS

In early 2002, the Corporation, as part of the President's USA Freedom Corps, announced its plans to reform and enhance national and community service programs, consistent with the following principles and reforms:

- **Support and encourage greater engagement of citizens in volunteering.** Reform and enhance national and community service programs to increase the quantity and quality of service opportunities for Americans.
- **Make federal funds more responsive to local needs.** Give the District and community officials more authority and flexibility to provide service opportunities to the citizens they represent.
- **Make federal support more accountable and effective.** Invest service opportunities that will produce results for local communities.
- **Provide greater assistance to community organizations (secular and faith-based).** Include community organizations (secular and faith-based) in more national and community service programs.

In order to achieve these goals, the following key elements have been developed for 2004 applications for funding. These elements apply to all AmeriCorps subgrantees, including continuation grants (those applying for funding for a second or third year of a three-year grant).

If any element listed in these guidelines as part of the program is omitted, either because of the program model, or for any other reason, please include an explanation in the application. The explanation will be considered during the grant application review process.

Performance Measures/Accountability

For 2004, DC CNCS will continue to help strengthen the accountability and performance of programs receiving funds under national service laws.

Recruitment and Management of Volunteers

A fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps is to help recruit, support, and manage the vast networks of volunteers assisting nonprofit organizations in meeting community needs. With the President's call for all Americans to serve two years--4,000 hours--in their lifetimes, AmeriCorps has been called upon to make volunteer recruitment and management a major focus of its efforts. Accordingly, volunteer recruitment and management is a key element for AmeriCorps programs in 2004.

Support for Community Organizations (Secular and Faith-Based)

For 2004, DC CNCS encourages applicants to support the efforts of civic, community, educational, and faith-based organizations to solve local problems and meet critical needs of individuals and communities. Applicants and continuing programs should demonstrate partnerships (host sites, or volunteer recruitment partnerships) with community or faith-based organizations.

Citizenship

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, has as one of its basic purposes to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community throughout the United States." During the coming program year the Corporation will work with DC CNCS to introduce an enriched civics training program for members that will focus on what it means to be an American citizen, the responsibilities of democratic citizenship, and the obligations of freedom.

Literacy and Tutoring Programs

A significant percentage of programs supported by the Corporation provide tutoring and other support to assist children in learning to read. The No Child Left Behind Act, enacted by the Congress in 2001, sets new scientifically-based standards for programs in schools across the country. This year with Corporation and DC CNCS funding, successful applicants will have to demonstrate that activities incorporate scientifically-based approaches to reading. Specifically, programs proposing tutoring and other literacy activities should address curricula, tutor training, outcomes, and standards for tutors.

Capacity Building and Sustainability

Capacity building is a process that helps an organization gain greater independence and sustainability. The Corporation views its program grants as investments expected to yield a set of self-sustaining activities over time. Achieving sustainability enables programs to continue national and community service activities beyond the life of a Corporation grant or with diminishing Corporation resources.

Federal Work-Study and Student Service

Federal law requires that all institutions of higher education devote at least seven percent of Federal Work-Study funds to community service unless a waiver from the Department of Education is received. An institution of higher education, must describe compliance with this requirement and efforts to support community service under Federal Work-Study. DC CNCS will take into consideration the institution's level of community service under Federal Work-Study in making grant decisions.

On-Line Grant Application Submission

The Corporation developed a new grants management system that includes on-line grant applications, awards, and reporting. Applicants will submit their application using this new on-line system, eGrants.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DESIGNING AN AMERICORPS PROGRAM

DC CNCS funds and supports high-quality programs that develop an ethic of civic responsibility in those who participate, strengthen communities, and help meet needs through service in the areas of the environment, education, public safety, homeland security, and other human needs.

Applicants should provide opportunities for the community to define and solve its problems. Successful applicants are able to demonstrate that the program or the service offered builds the capacity of nonprofit organizations to meet community needs and provides a benefit that the community values.

DC CNCS will assess applications based on the substance of what is proposed. Proposals need to demonstrate the relationship of the proposed activity with AmeriCorps members and link to the objectives they will accomplish.

NEEDS AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

In meeting local community needs, AmeriCorps continues to support a wide variety of activities in the issue areas of education, environment, public safety, and other human needs. As discussed in more detail below, homeland security has been added as a fifth AmeriCorps issue area. Also discussed below are new expectations for literacy and tutoring programs that operate using AmeriCorps members.

AmeriCorps programs provide a variety of specific and identifiable services that address community needs. In the past, performing direct service activities such as tutoring children, cleaning the Anacostia River, or building environmentally friendly parks was the primary focus of AmeriCorps members' service. However, AmeriCorps is now increasing its emphasis on capacity-building activities such as volunteer recruitment and management, which also play an important role in addressing community needs and ensuring the sustainability of activities that AmeriCorps supports. Direct service and capacity-building activities are both integral strategies for effective national service programs.

Literacy and Tutoring Programs
The National Reading Panel, which issued its report in 2000, noted:

> "…too many children struggle with learning to read. As many teachers and parents will attest, reading failure has enacted a tremendous long-term consequence for children's developing self-confidence and motivation to learn, as well as for their later school performance."

> "While there are no easy answers or quick solutions for optimizing reading achievement, an extensive knowledge base now exists to show us the skills

children must learn in order to read well. These skills provide the basis for sound curriculum decisions and instructional approaches that can help prevent the predictable consequences of early reading failure."

President Bush has made child literacy a national priority. He proposed, and signed into law, a comprehensive, bipartisan plan, known as the No Child Left Behind Act, to improve overall student performance in the Nation's schools. One key element of this plan is to support reading instruction built upon research-based methods that work to ensure that every child in public schools reads at or above grade level by third grade.

Consistent with this national priority, a significant percentage of national and community service programs designed by local communities assist children in learning to read.

In 2004, successful applicants conducting tutoring programs will be those that demonstrate that activities occur in sites that incorporate scientifically-based approaches[1] to reading. Specifically, successful applicants proposing tutoring activities will address the following:

1.   Curricula
The application should describe curricula and tutoring strategies that are *scientifically-based* and include the five components of reading and reading instruction identified by the *National Reading Panel* **OR** demonstrate that the activities are part of a program in a school under the No Child Left Behind Act that provides students with systematic instruction and practice in the five basic reading components.

2.   Tutor training
Tutor training should take place both before and during service and give tutors the skills and knowledge to support students' learning of the specific components of reading addressed in the report of the National Reading Panel.

The application should show how these reading components are incorporated into tutor training. Programs may also, where appropriate, demonstrate school site participation in training design and implementation and/or evidence of linkages between the instructional program of the school district and content of tutoring sessions conducted after school.

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[1] For information about the five basic reading components, scientifically-based reading instruction, and the National Reading Panel, see http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst/publications.html and http://www.nwrel.org/learns.

3. **Outcomes**
    The application should identify student achievement goals and show links between program objectives, tutoring activities, tutor training, and proposed strategies for achieving these goals. Applicants should address the approach they will use to measure outcomes.

4. **Standards for Tutors**
    Applicants should identify any standards proposed to qualify individuals as tutors. For example, some programs may screen individuals through a qualifications test; others may require enrollment in, or completion of, a reading course. Still others may require demonstration of certain academic skills, such as completing at least two years of college. During the coming year, the Corporation plans to work with DC CNCS to set standards for tutors.

DC CNCS will work with successful applicants to provide training and support to achieve effective tutoring programs and to maximize their impact on the individuals being served. Information about best practices can be viewed at http://www.ed.gov and http://www.nwrel.org/learns.

DC CNCS and the Corporation recognize that there are a wide variety of literacy activities being conducted by AmeriCorps programs, ranging from book drives to one-to-one tutoring programs. The above expectations apply only to those applicants engaged in tutoring or reading instruction in schools and related institutions such as nonprofit organizations running after-school programs.

Homeland Security
In a speech at the Center's for Disease Control in November 2001, President Bush specifically charged the Corporation with "creating new opportunities within the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs for public safety and public health efforts." This charge reflects the long experience of national service programs in responding to natural disasters, working in public health, or helping to ensure public safety—all skills that are directly relevant to securing communities in the face of terrorist threats.

For 2004, DC CNCS and the Corporation have designated homeland security as a major issue area on par with the environment, education, public safety, and other human needs for which funding is available. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Corporation define homeland security as appropriately engaging citizens and communities in preparedness and response to acts of terrorism and other disasters. Homeland security includes programs that prepare to minimize the damage and recovery from any emergency, natural or man-made.

How do homeland security programs differ from other AmeriCorps public safety, public health, and disaster preparedness and relief programs? While many of the day to day activities may be similar, homeland security programs also focus on preparing communities to be able to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, and respond to acts of terrorism or other disasters that breach the security and safety of their citizens. Applications submitted under this issue area should include evidence of organizing, training, and

preparing people for homeland security disasters or emergencies.

The best defense is a strongly interconnected community that is able to handle a disaster or an act of terrorism. Therefore, DC CNCS encourages partnerships with Citizen Corps volunteer programs within communities, including DC's Citizen Corps Council. The current Citizen Corps Programs in the District include: Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), led by the George Washington University Medical Center; Police Reserve Corps (PRC), led by DC Metropolitan Police Department; Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), led by District of Columbia Medical Society; Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Corps, led by Inner City Training and Services, Inc. through the Department of Health; Neighborhood Watch Programs (NWP) led by community groups, Disaster Action Team (DAT), lead by the American Red Cross of the National Capital Area and Unaffiliated Volunteer Management, led by Greater DC Cares.

Examples of homeland security include programs that:
- mobilize volunteers to assist first responders such as police departments, fire departments, and other agencies involved in public security;
- organize, conduct, and support community-based immunization programs related to bio-terrorism public health concerns;
- develop materials, identify resources, and educate the public to build awareness of and readiness for both natural disasters and intentional criminal/terrorist attacks;
- provide immediate support to relief agencies responding to a disaster. Services may include relief of rescue workers, search and rescue, first aid, coordination of emergency supplies, and establishment of communication links for relief workers;
- organize communities to identify and respond to crime through existing community organizations, law enforcement, schools, institutions of higher education, and the business community. Such programs may conduct needs assessments and identify resources to support improvements, such as the creation of Neighborhood Watch programs; and
- support long-term recovery efforts associated with the impact of disasters while providing periodic training for preparedness and response to homeland security emergencies.

For more information about Citizen Corps, visit its website at: www.citizencorps.gov. Homeland security programs approved for funding in DC for 2003 are listed on our website: www.cncs.dc.gov.

KEY ELEMENTS OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Through AmeriCorps, members develop additional skills, gain valuable experience, and receive education awards that can be used to repay qualified school loans or for future education.

To help ensure that members are prepared for and benefit from their service, applicants are required to include plans for member recruitment and training in their applications. Applicants should address elements such as civics training, skills training related to

performing service activities, leadership opportunities, and other training necessary for a program to have a positive impact on members. Much of the training is typically achieved through use of service-learning principles. Further, DC CNCS anticipate that the training will reflect the unique nature of programs and will be appropriate for the age, skill level, and other differences in the backgrounds of the members.

By the end of their term of service, AmeriCorps members should:

- understand and be able to participate effectively in American democracy;
- discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and institutions most effective in improving community conditions;
- help plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs and emergencies;
- foster within themselves and others positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good;
- have new or increased existing life and/or employment skills; and
- gain a greater appreciation and understanding of what it means to be an American, including an appreciation and understanding of those of different backgrounds.

Subgrantees are responsible for recruiting members. The Corporation has developed and implemented an on-line recruitment system to assist subgrantees. Online recruitment is required to supplement your recruitment efforts so as to maximize opportunities for Americans who want to participate in national and community service.

The following elaborates on key elements of member development:

Citizenship

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, has as one of its basic purposes to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community throughout the United States." By serving communities through AmeriCorps, individual members are demonstrating a critical component of citizenship recognized by President Bush in recent remarks proclaiming September 17 as Citizenship Day: "Citizenship not only involves a commitment to our Nation but also to our neighbors and those in need."

The Corporation, in partnership with a number of programs across the country, tested the impact of two curricula. The two sets of curricula were:

- *By the People*, developed by the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. *By the People* was designed to introduce AmeriCorps members and staff to a set of civic concepts that give a broader context to service and also a set of civic skills to help members serve more effectively.

- *A Guide to Effective Citizenship Through National Service*, developed by the Constitutional Rights Foundation. By linking citizenship to the mission of

AmeriCorps, the *Guide* helps members develop the connections between their sense of themselves and their value to the community. The *Guide* provides tools for integrating active citizenship into the AmeriCorps experience through interactive sessions.

DC CNCS expects that programs will incorporate these and other documents in the training and service experiences provided for members. Please check the Corporation's website at www.nationalservice.org for the latest information and citizenship toolkits for the availability of these materials.

As enhanced civics training programs are developed for programs to adopt or adapt, AmeriCorps programs will continue to have flexibility to determine the specific methods and materials to be used to conduct civics training. See Appendix A on page 40 for a more detailed description of the citizenship goals for AmeriCorps members.

Training Related to your Service Activities

Successful applicants will ensure training is provided for the activities that members will conduct. For example, recruiting and managing volunteers requires certain skills that need to be developed. Whether your activities involve tutoring children in reading, housing provision and improvement, or neighborhood/ community enhancement, members need to learn the basic skills and technical information associated with good practice before they perform service.

Leadership Opportunities

DC CNCS encourage programs to build member leadership capacity by providing opportunities for members to coordinate activities, recruit volunteers, and serve in team leader capacities in their programs. Programs may address leadership opportunities in the member development section of the application. Please note, however, that members may not be assigned to other members as the legal supervisors.

DC CNCS also sponsors the DC InterCorps Council (ICC), a member-driven and focused group of AmeriCorps members in the Washington, DC area. The group supports AmeriCorps through networking, training, outreach, and resource sharing. The ICC strengthens the relationship between individual members and the national AmeriCorps network to promote sustainable and effective service.

Supervision, Training, and Education

The experiences of programs across the country verify that successful member development depends upon proper supervision, training, and education. Successful applicants will be those that provide members with the supervision, training, skills, and knowledge they need to perform their tasks. Successful applicants will also give members the background information they need on the community in which they are serving and help them understand the community's need for a specific service or project. Applicants are required to have a qualified supervisor to provide members with regular and adequate oversight.

Support Services

The legislation requires support of members who are school dropouts in earning the equivalent of a high school diploma. DC CNCS encourages providing all members who are completing a term of service with information about education and career opportunities.

Diversity

Programs build strong communities when members and staff from different backgrounds are engaged in common service activities. Applicants should actively seek to include members and staff from the community, as well as men and women of various faiths, races, ethnicities, education levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, and physical and mental abilities. In assessing whether applicants meet this criterion, DC CNCS will take into account objectives required to recruit members and staff who share a specific characteristic or background. Please note, however, that applicants cannot violate the non-discrimination, non-duplication, and non-displacement rules that govern member and staff selection.

Disaster/Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness

AmeriCorps members as a group are one of the country's largest service providers. In times of national disaster or local emergencies, volunteers and AmeriCorps members can serve to enhance citizen safety and improve neighborhood emergency preparedness; members can also be mobilized to provide critical support to local communities. DC CNCS is providing emergency preparedness training opportunities through the Citizen Corps program. To help prepare District residents, DC CNCS has designated a number of emergency preparedness training slots for AmeriCorps members in 2004. DC CNCS requires that a minimum of one member per program receive training in the Citizen Corps, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). In addition, DC CNCS is working with local volunteer organizations to develop a Citywide Strategic Volunteer Response Plan so that in the event of a disaster AmeriCorps members and volunteers understand roles and responsibilities and can provide immediate assistance in communities. All programs will be expected to consider how their AmeriCorps members will participate in these plans.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

AmeriCorps strengthens communities by involving citizens directly in serving community needs. AmeriCorps members help bring individuals and groups from different backgrounds together to cooperate in achieving constructive change and to solve critical community problems.

Recruitment and Management of Volunteers

A fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps is to help recruit, support, and manage the vast networks of volunteers that meet community needs. By creating volunteer opportunities and helping organizations to effectively engage volunteers, AmeriCorps programs multiply their impact, build organizational capacity, and support the development of sustainable programs. Volunteering also provides an ideal opportunity to bring together

people of many racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds around a common goal and to foster the active citizenship upon which the health of our democratic system depends. With the President's call for all Americans to serve two years-- 4,000 hours--in their lifetimes, AmeriCorps has been called upon to make volunteer recruitment and management a major focus of its efforts. Accordingly, successful applicants will be those that address how an AmeriCorps program will effectively engage and support volunteers in meeting community needs.

AmeriCorps members can be deployed in a wide variety of ways to support volunteer recruitment and management. AmeriCorps members may be responsible for enlisting, training, or coordinating volunteers. They may help an organization to develop effective volunteer management systems that include clear position descriptions, screening techniques, or volunteer policy and procedure manuals. AmeriCorps members may promote retention of volunteers by planning recognition events or providing ongoing support and follow up to ensure that volunteers have a high quality experience. Members may assist an organization in reaching out to individuals and communities of different backgrounds when encouraging volunteerism to ensure a breadth of experience and expertise represented in service activities.

When considering how an AmeriCorps program can promote the effective involvement of volunteers, flexibility is the best approach. DC CNCS expects volunteers to be engaged in ways that support the mission of the organization being served. The involvement of volunteers should enhance or build upon any direct service goals of the program or organization of which the AmeriCorps members are a part. For example, a program may decide that a only a few members should be devoted entirely to an aspect of volunteer recruitment and management. Or, it may be determined that all members will spend a portion of their time supporting volunteers. The following examples are illustrative only and are not an exhaustive list:

- An AmeriCorps program designates a small number of members as volunteer managers who focus their efforts on recruiting and supporting volunteers whose activities complement the direct service of the rest of the corps.
- AmeriCorps members tutoring in an after-school program recruit volunteers to read with students once a week so that the program can serve additional students.
- An entire corps of AmeriCorps members is dedicated to serving as volunteer coordinators at various local host sites to assist these organizations in recruiting, training, and managing volunteers.

Whichever approach to volunteer recruitment and management is proposed, include it as a performance measure. See appendix B for additional information about developing performance measures.

The Corporation has developed a toolkit on volunteer recruitment with resources that build on existing expertise in the field to support this activity of subgrantees. These materials can be obtained at www.nationalservice.org.

Support for Community Organizations (Secular and Faith-Based)

Across the country, community organizations, both secular and faith-based, are on the front lines working to improve lives in some of the most vulnerable communities across America. The programs and activities supported through the Corporation already give vital help to front-line workers and community-based efforts. But more can be accomplished.

Support for community organizations extends across all national service programs. In 1993, the national service legislation defined community organizations as private nonprofit organizations that represent a community or a significant segment of a community and that are engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, and public safety community needs. The legislation specifically included churches and other faith-based organizations in this definition, recognizing the importance of such groups in dealing directly with the most difficult problems facing individual communities.

For the purpose of providing a common language to applicants, the Corporation considers a faith-based organization to include:

- a religious congregation (church, mosque, synagogue, temple, etc.);
- an organization, program, or project sponsored/hosted by a religious congregation (may be incorporated or not incorporated);
- a nonprofit organization founded by a religious congregation or religiously-motivated incorporators and board members that clearly states in its name, incorporation, or mission statement that it is a religiously-motivated institution; or
- a collaboration of organizations that clearly and explicitly includes organizations from the previously described categories.

For 2004, the Corporation's goals in this area are to increase the number of community, faith-based, and grassroots organizations that access AmeriCorps resources and to encourage larger nonprofit organizations to seek partnerships with community organizations (both secular and faith-based). DC CNCS encourage applicants to support the efforts of civic, community, education, and faith-based organizations to address local needs. Successful new applicants and continuing programs will be those that demonstrate partnerships (e.g., sub-grantees, host sites, or volunteer recruitment partnerships) with community organizations (secular and faith-based). This includes nonprofit organizations, schools, and neighborhood groups, as well as the types of faith-based organizations identified above.

DC CNCS is not prescribing any particular approach for meeting this goal of providing support to community organizations (secular and faith-based). As noted above, in some instances, community or faith-based organizations may be direct applicants for grant funding. In other cases, DC CNCS-funded programs might partner with such organizations to meet their objectives. In still other cases, DC CNCS subgrantees may serve as intermediaries.

Intermediary Organizations

Intermediary organizations provide the mechanism by which a number of community or faith-based organizations or grassroots groups may access AmeriCorps and other Corporation resources. DC CNCS defines intermediaries as national, regional, state, or local organizations that agree to provide the technical and financial support to assist community or faith-based organizations that do not have the capacity to perform these functions. Intermediaries serve as the legal applicant for a DC CNCS grant, thereby ensuring that the systems to manage a federal grant are in place. Intermediaries may place individual members at the site of many neighborhood, community or faith-based organizations and assume responsibility for monitoring the progress of the sites. DC CNCS encourages organizations that have the capacity to assist community or faith-based organizations in utilizing AmeriCorps members in their service activities to consider applying as an intermediary.

Examples of programs providing support to community and faith-based organizations include:

- A Texas community partnership of volunteer teams from businesses, civic groups, and churches is helping families along the path toward self-sufficiency. The program utilizes a team approach with AmeriCorps members organizing the skills, experiences, and resources of many people to help families receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) to overcome barriers to getting and keeping a good job.
- The Washington State Commission on National and Community Service has provided support to the Church Council of Greater Seattle. The Council helps support a team of AmeriCorps members, provided by the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer program, who are placed in schools, community centers, and church facilities to provide mentoring and after-school tutoring and to involve youth in safe, structured, out-of-school activities.
- An urban interfaith council has decided to place AmeriCorps members at each one of its member organizations to assist in their separate community service activities including housing counseling, after school programs, pre-school, adult literacy and English as a Second Language. The interfaith council selects the member organization with the greatest capacity to manage a federal grant as the organization that will apply.

Capacity Building and Sustainability

Effective capacity building is a process that enhances the mission, strategy, skills, and culture, as well as systems, infrastructure, and human resources of an organization. Often organizations view capacity building as only "technical assistance," such as improving systems, infrastructure, and/or human resources functions. However, it also refers to an organization's relationship with other organizations, people, and institutions that can provide critical information and resources which lead to the sustainability of the organization and its programs.

Why is capacity building important? Capacity building is a process that helps an organization gain greater independence and sustainability. DC CNCS views a program grant as an investment expected to yield a set of self-sustaining activities over time. An

organization is achieving its sustainability goals if the activities supported enhance the capacity of the organization to meet community needs absent federal funding. But because organizations, and the challenges they face, differ, DC CNCS does not have a philosophy that limits funding to a maximum period (e.g., three years).

Achieving sustainability enables programs to continue national and community service activities beyond the life of a Corporation grant. Some examples of sustainability include:

- *Diversification of Revenue Sources:* Multiple sources of funds to support and operate national and community service programs is a good measure of whether or not a program is sustainable. In contrast, organizations that depend on a single source of funds (including DC CNCS funds) to support and operate national and community service programs are inherently less sustainable;
- *Earned Income:* Organizations that diversify revenue structures for national and community service programs by generating revenue through fees or other kinds of earnings, consistent with OMB rules on project income, can lead to more sustainable programs;
- *Other Public (state and local) and Private Funding:* Organizations that diversify revenue structures for national and community service programs by building relationships with other public and private funding organizations, as well as businesses, can lead to more sustainable programs, including receipt of support (in-cash and in-kind) from local and state government, community foundations, national foundations, and businesses;
- *Program Quality and Efficiencies:* Organizations that demonstrate an increased level of productivity with flat or declining levels of federal support demonstrate effective models of sustainability. While these programs may not be totally independent of federal sources of revenue, the reduction of overhead costs and increased efficiencies in the means by which services are delivered can help make the program's efforts sustainable in a community in the long term;
- *Volunteer Recruitment and Management:* Organizations that recruit large numbers of volunteers as part of their AmeriCorps program can use the volunteers to conduct a wider range of community service activities;
- *Sustained Activities:* In communities where AmeriCorps programs have collaborated with a number of partners, the partners can agree to divide the national and community service activities among themselves such that the actual service continues without a grant from the Corporation; and
- *Corporate Organizations' Role:* AmeriCorps members work to establish community service programs for which corporations can commit their employees as volunteers on an ongoing basis for an extended period of time.

The Corporation sees sustainability as vital to meeting the needs of communities across the country. In order to ensure that Corporation programs are sustainable, applications should include specific information that demonstrates how an organization intends to improve capacity and move towards sustainability, ensuring that its national and community service program can continue in the absence of Corporation funding. DC

CNCS will use plans and progress towards achieving sustainability as a criterion in making new and continuation grant awards.

As a means of achieving sustainability and assisting organizations in meeting community needs, AmeriCorps members may assist grantee organizations in capacity building activities. Previously, the Corporation had advised that only AmeriCorps*VISTA members may conduct certain capacity-building activities. DC CNCS now encourages AmeriCorps members to engage in certain capacity building activities as well. For example, AmeriCorps members may recruit and manage other volunteers. They can write training materials that will be used to instruct the public about disaster preparedness. AmeriCorps members may assist in raising funds and securing resources to support service activities. They may conduct outreach to expand the number of individuals served by the nonprofit organization. Or AmeriCorps members may develop community partnerships that are intended to strengthen communities.

Achieving sustainability is a complex undertaking; DC CNCS is committed to working with organizations to accomplish this goal.

Community Involvement and Consultation

DC CNCS sees local involvement and input as vital to the development of high-quality service programs that sustain and build communities. Successful programs will be those that use extensive, broad-based local input to design, implement, and evaluate their projects. This includes consultation with:

- representatives from communities served;
- members (or potential members) of applicants; and
- appropriate community agencies (secular and faith-based), businesses, foundations, local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, and local government.

Partnerships with community groups may help to enhance organizational capacity and strengthen communities. They afford opportunities to collaborate and share technical expertise and resources.

TYPES OF AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

Applicants have great flexibility to design a program that develops the citizenship and a skill of members, strengthens nonprofit organizations, and addresses community needs. You may assign members to individual projects or organize them in teams. Similarly, an applicant may determine whether a full-time or less than full-time schedule is more appropriate to the program's goals. Our regulations provide a list of program types that illustrate the range of national service programs (see 45 C.F.R., Chapter XXV, Section 2522.110).

To learn about a number of programs focusing on different issue areas, visit the Corporation's web site at www.americorps.org.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAMS USING AMERICORPS FUNDS

The Corporation's requirements for AmeriCorps are set forth in the regulations and in these guidelines. In addition to being thoroughly familiar with the regulations, please read and use these application guidelines carefully because in some cases, more specific information is provided here.

The regulations for programs funded by AmeriCorps are published in the Code of Federal Regulations (at 45 CFR Parts 2510, 2513, et seq.), and may be available at public libraries or can be found at www.access.gpo.gov/ecfrl.

Performance Measures and Accountability

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, requires applicants for funding to apply measurable performance goals to determine the impact of AmeriCorps on communities and participants. Since 1993, programs and state commissions have been using varying forms of performance measures to articulate program goals and results.

In 2003, the Corporation and DC CNCS launched a major effort to work with applicants and programs over the next several years to strengthen the accountability and performance of organizations receiving funds under the national service laws. The Corporation is placing increased emphasis on the importance of performance measures as both a program management tool and a means by which to communicate program impact. This initiative builds upon the history of programs' efforts to measure the results of their activities and implements findings from a recently completed study by the Urban Institute that is available on the Corporation's website at www.nationalservice.org/research/index.html.

Experience has shown that designing performance measures can be difficult and that success requires flexibility and a cooperative approach. Therefore, the Corporation and DC CNCS will work closely with AmeriCorps programs over the next several years to determine and refine the best approach to measuring program performance. Currently, the approach the Corporation has devised (explained in detail in Appendix B) is intended to be a tool to define the need the program will address and the impact the program will have. The measures then provide indicators as to whether the program is having the intended effect.

An AmeriCorps program will:
- develop output, intermediate-outcome, and end-outcome measures [see Appendix B on page 42 for definitions of these measurement types];
- include at least three performance measures, as described in the next paragraph, in the application;
- participate in negotiating these measures as part of any grant award;

- develop a system for collecting and organizing this performance data on an ongoing basis; and
- include the results in progress and final reports.

Programs will likely have many performance measures. With respect to those reported to DC CNCS, the applications should specify at least three performance measures in the objectives worksheets. Among those should be at least one output, one intermediate-outcome, and one end-outcome measure. DC CNCS requires that there be at least one performance objective in each of the three categories – Needs and Service Activities, Member Development, and Strengthening Communities. Finally, at least one measure should reflect the goal related to managing and recruiting volunteers (see page 17) unless the application describes why this cannot be addressed.

DC CNCS fully recognizes that these performance measures will reflect individual program goals and circumstances, and DC CNCS expects that there will be a wide spectrum of different performance measures across all subgrantees. For example, a program that places individual members in separate nonprofit organizations (sites) to perform activities for those organizations will have measures that differ substantially from a program that uses AmeriCorps members to recruit volunteers to tutor in a single school. In certain programs, outcome measures may reflect the activities of a subset of members, not necessarily all members. DC CNCS recognizes that performance measures alone do not reflect the full scope and impact of AmeriCorps programs. Therefore, these measures are not the only items DC CNCS will consider when evaluating an application.

During implementation of a grant, DC CNCS also anticipates that performance measures may need to be adjusted based on program experience. Over time DC CNCS expects that performance measures will reflect the full scope of activities and goals of AmeriCorps programs, including meeting needs and service activities, developing members, and strengthening communities.

DC CNCS encourages careful consideration in developing objectives that lend themselves to performance-measured outcomes. During the grant review process, DC CNCS will evaluate the three proposed performance measures as part of the selection criteria for new programs and in approving continuation grants.

DC CNCS will negotiate specific performance measures in the grant[2]; and DC CNCS will take into account a program's record of meeting such performance measures in determining future funding. The Corporation plans to issue draft regulations on this topic for comment later this year.

Evaluation
Performance measures are designed to capture ongoing progress towards meeting program objectives. These ongoing (at least annual) program performance assessments

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[2] An organization receiving funding under the state formula category will negotiate performance measures with the applicable state commission. An organization receiving funds under the state competitive category will negotiate performance measures with the state commission and the Corporation.

should be supplemented with more in-depth, rigorous evaluation studies that measure the particular impact of national and community service programs.

While performance measurement and evaluation both include systematic data collection and measurement of progress, evaluations use scientifically-based research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program. Evaluations estimate the impacts of programs by comparing the difference between the outcomes for individuals receiving a service or participating in a program to the outcomes for similar individuals not receiving a service or not participating in a program.

The National and Community Service Act specifies that an applicant arrange for an evaluation of an AmeriCorps national service program receiving assistance from the Corporation. DC CNCS and the Corporation will consider such evaluation studies when making judgments about an organization's application for funds. Summary information concerning all evaluations of program outcomes completed in the last four years should be included in the application if available and the complete evaluation needs to be made available to DC CNCS either via an electronic or printed version. See the Application Instructions for information on how to submit evaluation materials. Applicants should recognize that evaluation is an allowable grant expense.

Monitoring and Management Responsibilities

Organizations face many challenges in administering AmeriCorps programs. Certain program models may make monitoring and program management a particular challenge for organizations. These include individual placements, programs that are spread out geographically, and programs that attempt to address many issue areas at once. If the program design includes one of these challenges, address it specifically in the application and provide specific strategies for monitoring and management. Strategies may include: recruiting and enrolling members who can work independently; providing appropriate orientation, ongoing training, and a means of regular communication; selecting strong host sites and ensuring strong support from direct-line supervision of members; and narrowing the range of tasks members perform to make monitoring easier.

Approved applications for an AmeriCorps grant are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of sub-grant-supported activities to assure compliance with applicable federal and District requirements to achieve performance goals. Monitoring needs to cover each program, function, and activity. This includes monitoring the service of members. Applicants are responsible for the timely and accurate documentation of member eligibility and service hours. Each program should develop systems that closely track and monitor these requirements.

SubGrantee Support for Programs

Programs must provide, account for, and document all financial support for programs. DC CNCS encourages all programs to raise some funds from the private sector, e.g., corporations, foundations, individuals, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations. DC CNCS requires, at a minimum, the following aggregate matches: Member Support Costs (at least 15%) including living allowance, FICA, Unemployment Insurance, Worker's

Compensation and Health Insurance; and Program Operating Costs (at least 33%) including Staff, Operating Costs, Internal Evaluation, and Administration. However, DC CNCS encourages projects to secure greater support from other local funding sources, including private sources. The commitment of applicant organization or host agency to securing resources, i.e., non-federal support for program implementation or sustainability, is our major focus under this criterion.

The match for member support costs (excluding health insurance) must be in non-federal cash. Operating costs may be in cash, in kind, or non-Corporation federal funds as match, if permitted by the rules governing those federal funds.

On-Line Grant Application Submission

The Corporation is working with other federal agencies to simplify federal grant-making processes (as required under Public Law 106-107) and provide access to federal activities over the Internet (in response to the President's Management and Performance Plan). The Corporation developed a new grants management system that includes on-line grant applications, awards, and reporting. AmeriCorps programs will continue to use the existing Web Based Reporting System (WBRS) for member-related procedures and for financial and program reporting. However, other activities, including applying for grants, audit resolution, the award process and close out process are now done through the new system, which is named eGrants.

To submit your application using eGrants, instructions are available at www.nationalservice.org. Specific instructions will be reviewed at the mandatory technical assistance sessions on November 20, 2004 from 9 a.m. to noon; or December 1, 2004 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Take the Metro red line to Judiciary Square, exit 4th Street, Courthouse side.) Call Cliffie Bailey at 202-727-7925 to RSVP for a training session.

Recruitment Tools and Resources—SubGrantee Requirement

Historically, subgrantees have had to develop their own recruitment systems. Within the last 18 months, the Corporation has introduced an on-line system to support grantees' efforts. In order to supplement grantees' recruiting efforts, and to make sure that the information in the nationwide system is comprehensive and of maximum benefit to individuals who want to be AmeriCorps members, use of the recruitment system, found on the AmeriCorps website (www.americorps.org), is now mandatory for AmeriCorps programs. This system allows AmeriCorps programs to post information about programs and member assignments. All AmeriCorps programs will be responsible for having a comprehensive program profile on-line and for considering on-line applicants for AmeriCorps positions. Programs may list multiple assignments as well as multiple geographic sites. Using set criteria, programs may search for prospective members for recruitment outreach efforts. Programs can e-mail prospective members and applicants to alert them to program information and updates, interview schedules, and other service opportunities. For more information, visit the website. As part of the web-based recruitment system, prospective members may apply directly to participating AmeriCorps programs electronically, as well as search for programs based on interests, eligibility, and

geographic preference. For those without web access or for prospective members who want information and application materials, the Corporation has an AmeriCorps hotline available at 1-800-942-2677.

Federal Work-Study and Student Service

[Required for Higher Education Institutions Applying for AmeriCorps funding]
The Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that all institutions of higher education who receive Federal Work Study (FWS) funds utilize a minimum of 7% of their total FWS budget for community service placements. Each college must also include a literacy component that is defined in regulations by the Department of Education. Because this is an important vehicle to encourage and expand student service, the Corporation is very interested in what campuses are doing to meet and exceed this requirement. Community service activities undertaken using FWS can be a valuable resource for national service programs. While the FWS program is administered by college financial aid offices, many colleges have built strong relationships between the community service, service-learning, or volunteer office and the financial aid office to enhance community service efforts of the campus. Some service offices even manage the community service FWS program on their campus. Both service offices and community partners can assist the financial aid office in enhancing community service FWS programs. For more information on the FWS for Community Service program, view online at www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/pubs/WorkStudy/.

The Corporation has summarized data reported to the Department of Education on Federal Work Study for Community Service usage. A comparison report is available online at www.nationalservice.org/resources/.

New applicants operated by higher education institutions that are applying for funding, should describe the institution's efforts to support community service under FWS. Specifically include the percentage of the school's 2002-2003 FWS funds that were used for community service placements and plans for further efforts in this area. DC CNCS will use this information in determining whether to make an award.

Prohibited Activities

In August of 2002, the Corporation published regulations concerning prohibited activities under AmeriCorps subtitle C programs. These regulations state:

What activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps subtitle C programs?

(a) while charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

    (1) attempting to influence legislation;
    (2) organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
    (3) assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
    (4) impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
    (5) engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
    (6) participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include

advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

(7) engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytizing;

(8) providing a direct benefit to--

(i) a business organized for profit;

(ii) a labor union;

(iii) a partisan political organization;

(iv) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and

(v) an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and

(9) such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

(b) individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

In the future, as called for under the proposed Citizen Service Act, the Corporation anticipates publishing regulations that set forth additional compliance requirements for AmeriCorps programs in a variety of areas, including requirements affecting programs that: refer individuals for federal assistance; conduct sex education; serve children; and transport minor children. DC CNCS will invite grantee comment on these issues, including the timing of implementation, before final regulations are issued.

Types of Application Submissions
First-time Applicants
If you are applying for the first time to become an AmeriCorps*State or Education Awards Program, you must submit an application following these guidelines and the specific program's application forms and instructions.

Continuing Programs
If a program seeks funds for its second or third year of operation within a multi-year grant period, please submit a continuation request as described in the application instructions entitled "Continuation Instructions." Please read these carefully.

AmeriCorps Programs in the Final Year of Grant Cycle
If a program is in its final year of a grant cycle, please submit a new application following these guidelines and the specific program's application forms and

instructions. The application must include a summary describing the program's impact and accomplishments for the previous three years of Corporation funding. **The summary is a requirement of the application. Applicants that received Corporation program funds and omitted this section will not be reviewed.** In addition to the application, DC CNCS staff will review and consider previous grant performance information and data from the management information systems, including enrollment and retention rates and impact data. DC CNCS will consider the quality of the program and the extent to which outcome objectives were successfully met in determining whether to recommend funding for a new grant.

Summer Programs

DC CNCS subgrantees start during the summer months. It is important to consider a summer component as part of your year-round program, or to expand your operations during the summer months. Care must be taken to ensure that the summer component is consistent with the overall mission of the applicant. Members added only for a summer period must complete at least 300 hours of service.

Terms of Service

Programs may engage members full-time or less than full-time. Full-time members must serve at least 1700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than one year. Half-time members must serve at least 900 hours during a period of one or two years as indicated in the approved budget. No member can serve less than 300 hours during a one-year period. Programs may propose at least 300 hours for minimum-time, at least 450 hours for quarter-time, and at least 675 hours for reduced half-time members based on the program design. However, within a program, DC CNCS generally requires members to serve the same number of hours. For example, members in a reduced half-time will only serve 675 hours and would not have members serving 300 hours. If any less than full-time program has a need for greater flexibility, DC CNCS will consider a proposal for two different sets of hours within the same program.

Title	# of Hours	Education Award
Full-time	at least 1700	$4,725.00
One Year Half-time	at least 900	$2,362.50
Two Year Half-time	at least 900	$2,362.50
Reduced half-time	at least 675	$1,800.00
Quarter-time	at least 450	$1,250.00
Minimum-time	at least 300	$1,000.00

Cost Per Member

The requirements in the following table apply to the cost per member that may be paid with Corporation funds.

AmeriCorps*State	AmeriCorps*Education Awards Program
Average budget cost per member, across all programs within a state, is ** **TO BE DETERMINED.** ** The maximum cost for any individual program is ** **TO BE DETERMINED** **	Not applicable.

** **Note: Congressional directives and funding constraints are likely to result in the average cost per member being reduced from the 2003 amount of $12,800.**

Member Living Allowance

The minimum fiscal year 2004 living allowance for a full-time member is $10,197. By law, the amount of the living allowance that a member can receive with the Corporation's and other federal funds may not exceed 85% of the minimum living allowance, or $8,667. DC CNCS does not set a minimum living allowance for members serving in Education Awards programs.

The maximum living allowance that may be paid with all sources of funds is $20,394 for full-time members and is set for anything less than full-time according to the chart on the page below

DC CNCS does not require providing a living allowance to half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, and minimum-time members. If applicants choose to provide any less than full-time members with a living allowance, use the chart below to determine the maximum amount of applicant and Corporation share. Please note that if a half-time program requires more than 900 but less than 1,700 hours, the prorated maximum living allowance is between $10,197 and $20,394, but the maximum federal share remains $4,455.

	# of hours[1]	Maximum Total Living Allowance	Maximum Federal Share of Living Allowance[2]
Full-Time	1700	$20.394.00	$8,667.00
One Year Half-Time	900	$10,797.00	$4,589.00
Two Year Half-Time	900	$10,797.00	$4,589.00
Reduced Half-Time	675	$ 8,098.00	$3,441.00
Quarter-Time	450	$ 5,398.00	$2,294.00
Minimum-Time	300	$ 3,599.00	$1,536.00

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[1] Represents the minimum number of hours a member serves.
[2] Federal share of living allowance is fixed for all positions regardless of hours served (this is current policy of FT and HT positions); programs have the option of adding more than 15% to increase member living allowance; programs are not required to provide living allowance to less than full-time members.

A living allowance is not a wage. The Corporation will continue to work with other federal agencies, states, and local entities so that they treat the living allowance appropriately for determining eligibility for other assistance categories, such as unemployment insurance.

Member Living Allowance Exceptions

Prior Existence: If programs existed prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (enacted September 21, 1993), the law does not require providing living allowances to members. If a program chooses to offer a living allowances, the program is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not from the maximum requirement. Thus, a program may offer full-time members living allowances between $0 and $19,800. Even if the allowance is less than $9,900, the portion that may be paid with the Corporation's and other federal funds cannot exceed 85%.   For example, if a program chooses to pay its full-time members $5,000, the Corporation will pay up to 85% of that amount, or $4,250.

Professional Corps: A professional corps program may recruit and place qualified AmeriCorps members in positions as teachers, nurses, doctors, police officers, lawyers, architects, engineers, or other professionals helping to meet critical needs in communities with inadequate numbers of such professionals. Public or private nonprofit employers must sponsor AmeriCorps members and agree to pay 100 percent of AmeriCorps members' salaries and benefits (excluding the national service education award that DC CNCS provides). Such salaries may exceed the maximum living allowance allowed in other national service programs.

Child Care and Health Insurance
[Not applicable to Education Awards Program]

Child Care
The Corporation directly funds child care for any full-time member who is eligible for and needs such assistance to participate in the program. The Corporation will pay 100% of the allowance as defined by payment rates of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). DC CNCS can provide technical assistance to applicants and can help determine a member's eligibility, provider eligibility, and child care allowance. Direct payments will be made to the child care providers. Therefore, do not include child care assistance in the AmeriCorps budget. The Corporation will base member eligibility for child care on need. Members' needs must be consistent with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990:
- total family income of members must be less than 75% of the state median income, as defined by the state under CCDBG guidelines;
- members must reside with and be a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 13.

When members are accepted in a program that is receiving and continue to receive child care assistance from other sources such as a parent or guardian, they are ineligible for child care from a program. On the other hand, if members become ineligible for assistance because of their enrollment in a program, or the member certifies that he or she needs child care to participate in the program, child care benefits must be provided.

Health Insurance
A program must provide full-time members with health insurance at the time of acceptance into a program if the member is not otherwise covered by a health insurance policy that provides the minimum benefits described below. If a member who previously had coverage loses it through no deliberate act of his or her own, such as parental or spousal job loss, basic health insurance must be provided for the member that meets the Corporation's requirements.

Health insurance can be obtained for members through any provider, as long as the policy provides the minimum benefits and is not excessive in cost. The Corporation will pay 85% of the cost of a policy that meets the above requirements as long as the Corporation does not determine the cost to be excessive. The Corporation does not pay any share of the cost of the policy that does not include the minimum benefits. Nor does the Corporation cover any person other than members. In general, the Corporation does not pay the costs of health benefits for half-time members unless they serve full-time for a sustained period of time. For example, members may receive benefits when they serve in a summer program for thirty-five hours per week with other members who receive health benefits.

Minimum Benefits
If a program has health insurance coverage, the coverage must provide or exceed these minimum benefits.

Covered Services: Physician services for illness or injury, hospital room and board, emergency room, x-ray and laboratory, prescription drugs.
Limited Coverage: Mental/nervous disorders, substance abuse.
Annual limits
       Deductible: Not more than $250 per individual.
       Coinsurance: Member pays no more than 20% or alternatively, comparable fixed fee. Exception: mental and substance abuse may require a 50% co-payment.
       Out-of-pocket: Not more than $1,000 per individual.
       Maximum Benefit: At least $50,000.

If a program elects to use a current health insurance policy that meets the above minimum benefit requirements, upon selection DC CNCS may require you to provide specific information on the benefits and policy.

Child Care and Health Insurance for Education Awards Programs

The AmeriCorps Education Awards Programs does not require either child care or health insurance for members. However, it may be offered by the local program that is responsible for the members.

National Service Identity and Service Gear

DC CNCS requires that a program is identified as part of the national service network and as a program in which AmeriCorps members serve. This should be done by using AmeriCorps logos, common application materials, and other means. Programs are required to use the AmeriCorps name along with the program's name.

Grant funds may be used to pay for a standard Service Gear package (AmeriCorps T-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, decals, and buttons) for members. It is required that programs provide this package to members. The standard Service Gear package is priced at $35. Many AmeriCorps members serve in settings where a shirt with a collar is the appropriate attire. If members need the shirt with a collar, include an additional amount of up to $35, for a maximum total of $70 of Corporation funds per member in the programs budget. DC CNCS will also reimburse up to $150 per member for additional safety apparel that is necessary for members to perform their daily service with a justification in the budget narrative. Gear can be ordered online at www.nationalservicecatalog.org.

Reasonable Accommodation for People with Disabilities

DC CNCS on National and Community Service recognizes the wealth of valuable skills and experiences that persons with disabilities can bring to AmeriCorps programs. As such, DC CNCS encourages a diverse membership and provides residents with the opportunity to engage in National Service programs as members or volunteers. Programs and activities must be accessible. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants, and program staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. By far, the vast majority of accommodations are inexpensive. For those limited cases where reasonable accommodations are more costly, DC CNCS has policies and procedures in place to request and provide reasonable accommodations for members serving in an AmeriCorps program.

Participation in National Days of Service

As part of the National Service Network, there are a number of opportunities for applicants to take part in national service days. DC CNCS expects all AmeriCorps programs, to participate in at least two days of service, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, National Volunteer Week, National Youth Service Day, and Make a Difference Day. In addition, DC CNCS expects programs with AmeriCorps members to participate in other national service activities such as common opening ceremonies (including the administration of an oath or affirmation), orientations, and training.

GRANT TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Grant Period

DC CNCS generally provides funding for a three-year project period. Applications must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the first year of operation and program objectives for a one-year period.

If DC CNCS approves the application and enters into a multi-year award agreement, DC CNCS will provide funding only for the first year of the program. DC CNCS has no obligation to provide additional funding in subsequent years. Funding for the second and third years of an approved program is contingent upon the availability of funds, adequate performance including satisfactory progress in relation to the approved objectives, submission of proposed changes in activities or objectives, a detailed budget and budget narrative for the applicable program year, and any other criteria established in the award agreement. In addition, Congress is considering changes to the Corporation's authorizing statutes. If changes are enacted, they will have an effect on grants supported by the Corporation, and will likely require changes in the grant, including potentially the grant period.

Amounts of Grants and Restrictions

The grant amount will vary by circumstance, need, and program model. The amount of formula dollars allocated to the District of Columbia is $103,000. A program may have only one application covering a particular project pending before the Corporation at one time.

Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements

As with all federal grant programs, it is the responsibility of all grantees funded by the Corporation to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. Under our regulations, each grantee must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of its program. To meet this requirement, a program must have adequate accounting practices and procedures, internal controls, audit trails, and cost allocation procedures. OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations, requires all organizations to have financial audits if they annually expend $300,000 or more under federal awards. This requirement applies to the organization's total expenditures each fiscal year under all of its federal awards, not just an AmeriCorps grant. The amount will rise to $500,000 for fiscal years that begin after December 31, 2003.

As with all federal grant programs, a program must ensure that activities, will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving service members under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. See the grant provisions for specific requirements. The Corporation's requirements related to program participation, including anti-discrimination requirements, are set forth in applicable grant provisions.

REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

DC CNCS receives far more applications than can be awarded. This process is highly competitive; therefore, DC CNCS is seeking high quality programs that fully address these guidelines.

DC CNCS selects applications using an extensive, multi-stage process. The first stage includes reviews by the DCCNCS, as well as, peer review panels, and approval by the Board of Commissioners. Before a program is recommended for approval, DC CNCS may conduct clarifying interviews in person or through conference calls. Selected applicants are then forwarded to compete nationally.

The second stage includes reviews by the Corporation staff with final approval of the Corporation Chief Executive Officer. During the national peer review process the Corporation uses outside experts including community service practitioners, educators, administrators, former national service participants, and specialists in the areas of environment, public safety, education, homeland security, and other human needs to evaluate the quality of applications. The Corporation's staff review will determine the relative quality among national applications but also consider statutory funding requirements.

DC CNCS will enter into negotiations with potentially successful applicants in a manner that may require significant modifications to original proposals. Awards are contingent on successful completion of negotiations. The number of applications DC CNCS approves and the number of education awards DC CNCS provides during each year of the three-year funding cycle is subject to the availability of funds and education awards.

SELECTION CRITERIA
The following criteria will be used to determine quality and used as part of the process to select programs that will receive assistance.

The bullets under each sub-heading describe what DC CNCS considers important and what should be included in the application narrative. Program Design includes three sub-categories and represents 60 percent of the basis that DC CNCS uses to evaluate and select each program. The sub-categories of Participant Development, Strengthening Communities, and Needs and Service Activities are related and are therefore grouped in a single "Program Design" criterion. DC CNCS and Corporation will give equal importance to these subcategories when judging applications.

PROGRAM DESIGN (60%)

Needs and Service Activities
- Well-documented compelling community need;
- Well-designed activities with appropriate performance measures;
- Well-defined roles for participants that lead to measurable outcomes or impact;
- Previous history of accomplishments in the proposed activity areas;
- Effective involvement of target community in planning and implementation; and
- Ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.

Member Development
- Effective plans for recruiting, developing, training and supervising a diverse membership and recognizing participants;
- Well-designed activities that promote an ethic of service and civic responsibility;
- Well-designed plan to engage participants in high-quality service learning as defined by the Corporation;[1] and
- Well-defined activities that include DC CNCS training requirements in disaster preparedness.

Strengthening Communities
- Developing community resources, including recruiting and managing volunteers, with appropriate performance measures;
- Strong community partnerships, including well-defined roles for faith- or community-based organizations;
- Potential for sustainability;
- Enhanced capacity building of organizations and institutions; and
- Bringing together people of different backgrounds.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (25%)
- Ability to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight;
- Sound track record of accomplishment as an organization;
- Well-defined roles for staff and administrators; and
- Well-designed plan or systems for self-assessment, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

BUDGET/COST EFFECTIVENESS (15%)
- Commitment of applicant organization or host agency to securing resources, i.e., non-federal support, for program implementation or sustainability;
- Adequate budget to support program design; and

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[1] We encourage all applicants to include service-learning activities in their program design. However, this is only a selection criterion for Learn and Serve America.

- Cost-effective within program guidelines.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a list of considerations that DC CNCS staff and commissioners will give to applications in making final selections:

- programs that are high-quality, innovative, have the potential to be replicated by programs in other areas, and that can sustain themselves or the service activities with other support when the grant period ends;
- programs that collaborate with or propose to foster Federal Work Study students in community service;
- a wide range of program designs and approaches to community service that meet community needs;
- programs that sponsor AmeriCorps activities in areas of high concentrations of low-income people;
- programs that demonstrate they can effectively develop and administer an AmeriCorps program with proper supervision, monitoring, evaluation, and financial controls.

In addition, DC CNCS seeks a participant pool that includes young and older adults, a balance of individuals who have not attended college and those with college education experience, approximately equal numbers of men and women, individuals with disabilities and individuals of all races, ethnicities, faiths, and economic backgrounds.

DC CNCS Priorities

The following is a set of priorities that DC CNCS will consider in making final selections. A program that is forwarded to compete for the *State formula competition must consider the following:

1.) Enhance the education of our youth;
2.) Improve citizen safety and neighborhood emergency preparedness; and
3.) Strengthen our community through service

The Corporation for National Service Priorities

The following is a set of priorities that the Corporation will consider in making final selections. A program that is forwarded to compete for the national competition must consider the following:

(A) national service programs that serve or involve children and youth;

(B) national service programs that support the efforts of civic, community, education, and faith-based organizations to solve local programs;

(C) national service programs that promote the effective involvement of volunteers;

(D) national service programs that build the capacity of community organizations;

(E) national service programs that carry out literacy and tutoring activities;

(F) innovative national service programs;

(G) national service programs that are well established in one or more States at the time of the application and are proposed to be expanded to additional States;

(H) grant programs in support of other national service programs if the grant programs are to be conducted by nonprofit organizations with a demonstrated and extensive expertise in the provision of services to meet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs;

(I) professional corps programs; and

(J) programs that--

    (i) received funding from the Commission on National and Community Service (the predecessor agency to the Corporation);

    (ii) the Corporation determines to meet the requirements of sections 142, 143, and 148-150 of the original National and Community Service Act of 1990, in addition to the current requirements of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended; and

    (iii) include an evaluation component.

PROGRAM SUPPLEMENTS

EDUCATION AWARDS

Addressing Key Application Elements

The Education Awards program can present a special challenge to sponsoring organizations, since the Corporation currently provides up to $400 per full-time equivalent member to carry out the national service program. A sponsoring organization typically will have to use non-Corporation sources to support the program. At the same time, since the Corporation is making a substantial investment of federal resources by providing education awards for members of Education Award programs, it expects to see as many of the key elements of these guidelines incorporated into these programs as possible.

DC CNCS expects that the implementation of these elements by Education Award programs will vary in nature and extent. DC CNCS also anticipates, however, that applicants may develop creative approaches to addressing these key elements with the resources provided or committed from non-Corporation sources. The intent of the guidelines is to encourage applicants to develop, and then to describe in their applications, the approach that makes sense for their individual programs. If there are instances where a program is unable to include an element of the guidelines as part of application, please include an explanation in the application. The explanation will be considered during the grant application review process.

Planning Grants

The Corporation is accepting planning grant applications for the 2004 – 2005 program year to assist faith- or small, community-based organizations in their development of a strong AmeriCorps program design. The purpose of planning grants is to enable small community- or faith-based programs to get to the stage where they may compete successfully for operating assistance in the following grant cycle. The Corporation will make planning grants available to eligible applicants that have identified a sound concept for a national service program, but that require resources in order to plan, develop, and prepare the program for implementation. While the amounts and terms of planning grants will vary by circumstance and need, in general they will range up to $50,000 and cover a period of six months to a year. All planning grants are subject to a minimum 33% grantee share. DC CNCS will issue separate guidelines and instructions for the application process.

APPENDIX A – CITIZENSHIP GOALS FOR AMERICORPS MEMBERS

A successful applicant will provide training and use the service experience to help members acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to be active citizens of communities--local, state, and national. This primarily means enhancing members' understanding of how our democracy works and the value of their playing an active role in it.

Citizenship goals for AmeriCorps programs to consider adopting for their members are to:

- foster within themselves and among their team members positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good;
- discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and institutions that are most effective in improving community conditions;
- enhance their ability to plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs; and
- develop the social, cultural and analytical skills necessary to effectively participate in American democracy.

In achieving these goals, programs could assist AmeriCorps members in attaining the following educational outcomes:

Knowledge
Members will:

- recognize the variety of characteristics and actions of effective, participating citizens;
- identify and describe the community in which they live;
- understand and be capable of explaining the role and importance of the voluntary sector in our nation;
- understand and be capable of explaining how the principles set out in the Declaration of Independence, and the Preamble to the Constitution, are related to the voluntary sector;
- identify, define, and describe local problems and their connection to problems on the state and national levels; and
- discuss and explore the variety of ways an individual can help solve community problems.

Skills
Members will:

- process and evaluate information for objectivity, accuracy, and point of view;
- apply information to effective efforts to help solve social problems;
- assess the consequences of and appropriate context for personal action;
- further develop and use critical-thinking skills and ethical reasoning to make informed and responsible decisions;

- further develop and use verbal and written communication skills to convey ideas, facts and opinions in an effective and reasonable manner;
- work cooperatively with others and develop effective teambuilding practices;
- effectively advocate individual and shared interests; and
- assess and apply their AmeriCorps experiences for future educational or professional development.

Attitudes

Members will:

- recognize and respect the different backgrounds of Americans;
- develop a sense of personal efficacy;
- understand that rights and freedoms require accepting civic responsibilities; and
- foster within themselves the value of service, the importance of continued involvement in the community, and attachment to the principles of freedom and equality on which our nation rests.

APPENDIX B – PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As stated in the Performance Measures and Accountability section of the guidelines, the Corporation is placing increased emphasis on the importance of performance measures as both a program management tool and a means by which to communicate program impact. The approach presented in this document builds upon the history of AmeriCorps program managers' efforts to measure results and implements findings from a recently completed study by the Urban Institute that is available on the Corporation's website at www.nationalservice.org/research/index.html.

Performance measures are intended to be a useful tool for program managers to define and communicate **the need** their program will address and **the impact** the program will have. The measures provide indicators as to whether the program is having the intended effect.

Defining performance measures is just one step in the program design phase. If it is helpful, use a standard framework (called a "logic model") to help develop a program design 1) think through each of the different activities in which AmeriCorps members will be engaged, 2) identify the likely result of those activities, and 3) determine how to measure those results. The table below is an example of how an approach to defining activities and measures might be structured to accomplish a specific goal. The table is illustrative only; do not include this table in the application.

Goal: AmeriCorps members help high-school students increase school success and positive behavior

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	Intermediate OUTCOMES	End- OUTCOMES	MEASURES
Staff; AmeriCorps members; and high-school students with low grades and poor school attendance	AmeriCorps members mentor youth in three one-hour sessions each week during the school year.	30 AmeriCorps members spent 120 hours each with 30 high-risk teenagers.	59% of teens being mentored improved school attendance 67% improved attitudes toward school 64% improved attitudes toward family life	95% had no contact with juvenile justice system during the program 70% were promoted to the next grade level 23% obtained employment	*School attendance records *Youth surveys *Criminal justice records *Employer surveys

For each major activity, think through what the likely outputs, intermediate-outcomes, and end-outcomes might be. Below are definitions; however, it is important to note that assigning a measure to these categories is not a science. Use this categorization as a way to help organize thinking and recognize that there is not a "right" or "wrong" answer as each a program will have its own set of circumstances.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEFINITIONS

Output indicators -- specify a count of the amount of service members or volunteers have completed, but do not provide information on benefits or other changes in the lives of members and/or beneficiaries.

Intermediate-outcome indicators -- specify a change that has occurred in the lives of beneficiaries and/or members, but is still short of a significant, lasting benefit for them.

End-outcome indicators -- specify a change that has occurred in the lives of beneficiaries and/or members that is significant and lasting.

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Once activities are defined, track the progress made. Remember, only report one output, one intermediate-outcome and one end-outcome. These three measures could pertain to three different activities (for one activity report only on outputs, for a second activity report only on outputs and intermediate-outcomes, and for a third activity report only on outputs and end-outcomes).

After a measure is chosen the objective worksheets enclosed in the application packet need to be filled out. This year, DC CNCS has redesigned the worksheet to reflect the Corporation's heightened emphasis on performance measurement. The worksheets will identify which type of measure will be used for each objective, what activity will lead to the output, intermediate-outcome, or end-outcome and the measurement method. These new objective worksheets will be a part of the e-grants system. DC CNCS encourages use of the performance measurement objective worksheets early in the process of completing the application, as experience indicates well-constructed objectives are essential to a quality application.

A few examples follow. See the application instructions for more details.

Outputs Examples

Environment

6 members and 40 volunteers (providing 3000 hours of volunteer service) will conduct a series of neighborhood cleanup projects to improve the safety and usability of neighborhood parks, as measured by attendance logs.

Education

10 members will train 400 residents through 2 workshops on ways to prevent or better address environmental problems in the community, as documented by workshop sign-in sheets.

Intermediate-outcomes examples

Volunteer Recruitment

10 Members will recruit and manage 100 volunteers (providing 800 hours of service) to prepare and deliver nutritious meals twice a week to homebound HIV/AIDS patients, as measured by volunteer time sheets.

Member Development

40 members will receive training in housing counseling, problem-solving, and construction in order to increase members' abilities to serve homeless and low-income persons, as measured by 100% of members receiving certification as Housing Counselors or Construction Assistants from the Federation of Appalachia Housing Enterprises (FAHE).

Community Strengthening

10 members will recruit 32 families (100 students) to participate in a parent-child reading activity resulting in 80% of parents reporting at least a one hour increase in parent-child reading each week as reported through weekly family diaries of reading activities.

Capacity Building

5 members will help expand the community computer center's programs to include fee-based courses, which will generate an additional $5,000 in revenue to sustain the center's free community services, as reported on accounting records.

End-outcomes examples
Education

12 Members will provide 7,650 hours of in-class tutoring to 85 elementary school students with 80% of students currently reading *below basic* increasing to at the least the *basic* reading level, as measured and documented by the Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition.

Public Safety

20 members will assist victims of domestic violence to make personal safety plans, get temporary restraining orders, and find alternative living situations or housing resulting in an 80% decrease in repeat calls to police (as documented by police reports).

Member Development
Members will increase their belief that they can participate in and improve civic life, as measured by a standardized questionnaire.

The Corporation has made available, on the website and through technical assistance resources, information that will facilitate the development of objectives and assist in the long-term implementation of performance measures within national and community service. View the website – www.nationalservice.org – for information on performance measurement topics. Please use any of the following resources in developing performance measures:

- Please see Project STAR's website at www.projectstar.org/ and their "Performance Measurement Toolkit" at www.projectstar.org/star/AmeriCorps/pmtoolkit.htm
- *Evaluation Toolkit: A User's Guide to Evaluation for National Service Programs* www.projectstar.org/star
- *W.W. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook* www.wkkf.org/pubs/Pub770.pdf
- *Measuring Volunteering: A Practical Toolkit* www.independentsector.org/research/toolkit/default.html
- *Online Evaluation Resource Library* www.oeri.sri.com
- *Center for Accountability and Performance* www.aspanet.org/cap/index.html
- *Outcome Measurement Resource Toolkit, United Way of America* www. national.unitedway.org/outcomes
- *Urban Institute Report on the Corporation's performance measurement at* www.nationalservice.org/research/index.html.
- *The Results & Performance Accountability Implementation Guide* www.raguide.org/Default.htm

DC CNCS also encourages programs, when needed, to seek the help of local or regional professionals to perform and oversee performance measurement activities, including the development of a plan that encompasses the collection of and reporting on outcome data that will be used to improve program quality.